

## **406 CRIME AND DISASTER SCENE INTEGRITY**

### **406.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The protection and integrity of a crime scene is of the utmost importance for the successful apprehension of criminals and successful prosecution. The integrity of a disaster scene is equally as critical for the protection of life and property and investigation by proper authorities.

### **406.2 CRIME SCENE RESPONSIBILITIES**

The first officer at the scene of a crime or major incident is generally responsible for taking reasonable efforts to preserve the scene. Officers shall also consider officer safety and public safety, including reasonable efforts to render medical aid to any obviously injured parties. Once an officer has assumed or been assigned to maintain the integrity of the crime/disaster scene, the officer shall continue the assignment until relieved by a supervisor.

#### **406.2.1 FIRST RESPONDER CONSIDERATIONS**

The following list generally describes the functions which the first responder should take at a crime or disaster scene. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive, is not necessarily in order and may be altered according to the demands of each situation, the availability of resources, capacity of personnel and totality of each circumstance:

1. Ensure no suspects are still in the area.
2. Broadcast emergency information, including all requests for additional assistance.
3. Provide first aid to injured parties if it can be done safely.
4. Evacuate the location as required.
5. Identify hazards or dangerous conditions to responding personnel.
6. Secure the inner and outer perimeter if needed.
7. Protect items of apparent evidentiary value.
8. Identify potential witnesses.
9. Start a chronological log noting critical times and personnel allowed access.
10. Prevent unauthorized access of personnel, the media or the public.

#### **406.2.2 EXECUTION OF HEALTH ORDERS**

Any licensed member of this department is authorized to execute and enforce all orders of the local health officer, which have been issued for the purpose of preventing the spread of any contagious, infectious or communicable disease.

### **406.3 SEARCHES AT CRIME OR DISASTER SCENES**

Officers arriving at crime or disaster scenes are often faced with the immediate need to search for and render aid to victims and to determine if suspects are present and pose a threat. Once officers are satisfied that no

additional suspects are present and/or there are no injured persons to be treated, those exigent circumstances will likely no longer exist. Officers should thereafter secure the scene and conduct no further searches until proper authority for the search is obtained.

#### **406.3.1      CONSENT**

Officers should obtain consent to search from authorized individuals where possible, but should also consider obtaining consent and a search warrant in the case of serious crimes or major investigations.